A true

NARRATIVE

Of the PROCEEDINGS AT THE

Surrey-Aſſizes,

Holden at *Kingſton* upon *Thames*,

On the 4, 5, and 6th of *July*, 1676.

Setting forth the Tryal, Condemnation, Confeſſion and Execution of *John Sampſon* the Broker, for murthering his Tenant; and *George Comes*, for ſtealing of ſeveral Horſes.

Likewiſe the Tryal of two Women; the one that was Convicted the laſt Lent-Aſſizes, for killing of a Man that was fighting with her Husband: the other an old Offender that ſtood Convicted, received Sentence by her former Judgment.

With an Account how many are Condemned, how many burned in the Hand, to be Tranſported, and to be whipt.

Theſe are to ſatisfie all Perſons, that the Book, publiſhed of the Aſſizes at Kingſton *(without the Letters* D M. *in the Title-page) is a falſe Account, and without Licenſe.*

Licenſed, *July* 12. 1676. *Ro. L'Eſtrange.*

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At the Aſsizes held at *Kingſton* upon *Thames*, 4th, 5th, *and* 6th *of* July 1676.

THe moſt conſiderable Trial here, was that of *John Sampſon*, of the Pariſh of St. *Mary Newington-butts* in the County of *Surrey* Broker, Indicted for willfully murthering of one *Mary Bartlet*; the Caſe appeared thus:

The Priſoner being a man notorious for Racking and oppreſſing the Poor, having (as 'tis ſaid) been the occaſion of ruining ſeveral Families, the Huſband of the Woman killed being his Tenant for a Room, in a place called *Whites* ſtreet, at Twenty Shillings a Year, was at *Michaelmas* laſt got behind-hand, ſo as to owe him a Quarters Rent, which he knew not which way to pay; and therefore well knowing the cruel temper of his Landlord would lay him in a Goal for that inconſiderable Summe if he ſtaid, concluded it the beſt way to ſhift for himſelf; and meerly upon that account went away privately, and left his Wife and three ſmall Children to the Mercy of the Broker, which proved moſt barbarous Inhumanity. For ſome ſhort time afterwards, that is to ſay, on *Friday*, the 13*th* of *November* laſt paſt, he came

to the premiſſes, and having ſeized on all thoſe wretched Moveables the poor Woman had about her, he turned her and her three helpleſs Babes to ſeek their Lodging (it being then ſad cold Weather) in the open Street: Nor would this content him, but as if he had thought to get that ſatisfaction out of her Carcaſs, which he could not finde in her Goods and Chattels, he flew upon her moſt furiouſly, giving her moſt lamentable Blows, Kicks and Spurns, eſpecially about the Breaſt and Belly, ſo that ſhe cried out moſt miſerably, ſaying, he had killed her; and yet it was proved he ſtill continued Beating her, till ſome Neighbours took him off: the Woman lived but three daies after, and all that time was forced to lye with her three Children, in a cold, pitiful Hovel or Dog-kennel; and continued to the laſt to affirm, that her Landlords Blows and Cruelties were the occaſion of her Death: which Words were the more confirmed, when the Women going to lay the Corps forth, found a great part of her Belly black and blew with the Bruiſes and Batteries ſhe had received.

Hereupon the Coroner was made acquainted with the buſineſs, the Body viewed, and the Act found by his Inqueſt wilful Murther: upon which the ſaid *Samſon* was apprehended, and committed to the County Goal, where he was brought to the Bar the laſt Lent Aſſizes, in order to his Tryal; but the Court then underſtanding, that the principal and moſt material Witneſs againſt him, though bound over to give Evidence, was lately gone away, not to be found; and having ground

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to believe, That he ſo abſented himſelf upon the Priſoners procurement, they having been within few daies together in deep conſultation: It was thought fit to put off the Trial till the next Aſſizes, and in the mean time *Sampſon* to remain in Cuſtody without Bail; and a Warrant ſent forth to take up the Evidence, and ſecure him wherever they could finde him; who was accordingly apprehended, and now at this Aſſizes brought to give teſtimony againſt him.

The Broker pleaded not Guilty to the Indictment; but there came in no fewer than Thirteen Witneſſes againſt him, amongſt whom the Child of the Party murthered proved the moſt material: 'twas proved that he had threatned her ſtrangely, two or three daies before he fell upon her; that ſhe gave him no provocation; and that when ſhe cryed out *Murther*, he continued to beat her, ſwearing he would ſtill her noiſe, *&c.* Whereupon on full Examination of all Circumſtances, the Jury brought him in Guilty of wilful Murther, and now he is like to ſuffer juſt puniſhment for all his former ill practices, having been one of the greateſt Oppreſſors of the Poor in *England:* Two Chyrurgeons that viewed the Womans Body received a ſevere Check from the Court, for that they ſeemed to be partial, and too favourable towards the Priſoner in giving their Evidence touching the Womans Bruiſes, which were ſworn by others to be much greater than they repreſented them.

Another man, living within three or four Miles of *Kingſton*, was Indicted and Arraigned there, for

for ſtealing of divers Horſes, for which ſeveral Bil's were preferred againſt him. Being at the Bar, he refuſed to hold up his Hand, or to plead to any Indictment: whereupon the Court ſeveral times admoniſhed him, and ſet him by for Five Hours, ordering Two Miniſters to go and diſcourſe with him; whom he told, that he knew he was a Dead Man, and therefore would receive no Trial. However, at laſt he was prevailed with, and did plead Not Guilty; but was Convicted by clear Evidence upon ſeveral Indictments, and for the ſame received Judgment of Death.

In *Lent* Aſſizes in *Southwark*, there was a Man and his Wife tryed for killing a Carman: They being drinking, ſome ſmall quarrel aroſe, which was followed by blows; but two to one being odds in Fighting, as well as at Footbal, the Carman was worſted; and notwithſtanding he ſuffer'd ſeverely by the Mans ſtrength, yet it was found that the Woman was as much or more inſtrumental to his ruine.

Both the Husband and Wife were found Guilty of Manſlaughter, for which he had the benefit of the Clergy, and was branded; but the Woman by her Sex being uncapable of that Priviledge, was condemned; only upon her Pleading her Belly, and being found with Child by a Jury of Matrons, Execution was reſpited till this Aſſizes, ſhe in the mean time being delivered of a Child, about Sea-

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ven Weeks ago; and now being called to the Bar, hath now pleaded her free pardon.

Another woman, that had been an old offender, and convicted the laſt Aſſizes, but reprieved then on the account of her Pregnancy or being with Child, was now likewiſe ſentenced to be haug'd upon her old Judgment.

Two Pickpockets were arraigned, a man and a woman: They were both proved to be moſt dexterous and incomparable Artiſts in their Profeſſion, and ſo well diſpoſed, that it appeared one of them was wont frequently to haunt Conventicles and private Meetings, but not with any pretence to benefit his Soul by hearing, but onely to dive into the Pockets of thoſe that ſtood next; and for want of better booty, to ſteal Handkerchiefs, and now and then a Bible: The man, 'tis believed, will ſuffer, but the woman proving with Childe, is reſpited for ſome time.

A boy was proſecuted for endeavouring to ſet his Maſters houſe on fire in *Southwark*; but there being no harm done, and the Act ſeeming to be rather ſimplicity than malice, telling an impertinent ſtory that a ſtrange man in black bid him do it, and then he ſhould be free from his Maſter, that, it ſeems, ſometimes gave him Correction when he deſerved it, upon the whole matter it was thought fit to order him to be well whipped for his Rogue-

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ry, and teach him to deſiſt for the future from imagining any ſuch wicked Attempts.

There were tryed ſeveral other Felonies, petty Larcencies, and the like, too tedious to relate; there being in all fifty and odd Priſoners carried down in order to tryal, but onely five Condemn'd to die, ſeveral burnt in the Hand, three likely to be Tranſported, and four to be Whipped at the Carts tail.

When the Broker came to the place of Execution, he deſired the people to take example by his ſad end, and to have a care how they wracked the Poor, which he confeſſed was a thing that he had been too much guilty of; and that they ſhould be contented with what God had ſent them, and not to covet other mens Goods. So after ſome conference with the Miniſter, the Executioner did his office: The other three ſaid very little.

FINIS.